

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader.

Mr. DASCHLE. I thank the distinguished Senator from Louisiana. I appreciate all of her effort in providing leadership to the Senate on this appropriations bill. We will have more to say about it next week.

ADMINISTRATION'S LACK OF COOPERATION WITH 9/11 COMMISSION

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I wish to use leader time to talk briefly about another matter I call to my colleagues' attention.

Late last year, I had the opportunity—indeed the obligation—to work on and support the most important commission that has been established in all my years in public service.

In the aftermath of the terrible terrorist attacks of September 11, the families of the victims and all Americans turned to their elected leaders in the White House and the Congress to help them obtain some answers to how this tragedy occurred and what steps should be taken to prevent future 9/11s.

Senate Democrats, led by Senators LIEBERMAN and TORRICELLI, proposed that the best way to provide these answers was to establish a blue-ribbon, independent panel to carefully sort through all the facts and evidence and interview key policymakers.

The record will clearly show that this commission was strongly opposed by the White House. In fact, Vice President CHENEY called me twice to indicate, incorrectly in my view, that creating such a commission could jeopardize the administration's efforts in the war on terrorism.

Other Bush officials in other settings made it clear to the families and Democratic and Republican members of Congress that they were less than enthusiastic about having a commission examine the administration's actions prior to 9/11.

After it became clear that their opposition was politically unsustainable, the administration switched gears and decided to support a commission provided that Congress remove several key elements of the Lieberman/Torricelli proposal designed to ensure the commission functioned as effectively and independently as possible.

Congress was effectively asked to take it on faith that the executive branch would work with the commission on a nonpartisan effort to shed light on the tragedy of 9/11.

Regrettably, that promise has not been realized as the administration continues to throw roadblocks in front of the commission's work. In July, the Chairman Kean and Vice Chairman Hamilton stated publicly that the Bush administration has been slow and unresponsive in producing information sought by the commission.

Shortly after receiving this report, the Senate unanimously approved an amendment offered by myself and sev-

eral other Senate Democrats urging the President to immediately and publicly call for all executive branch agencies to provide their fullest and most timely cooperation to the commission.

Unfortunately, no such call was issued, 2 more months have elapsed, and we have another report form the chairman and vice chairman that should provide no comfort to those seeking the truth about what happened on 9/11. While stating that administration cooperation has improved, at the half-way mark of the commission's life, Chairman Kean said, "We have not got everything. We have not gotten everything that we feel we need to do our job."

Chairman Hamilton indicated that the commission's work is at a crunch point and that unless the commissioners receive satisfactory cooperation from the White House the Commission will be unable to meet its May, 2004 reporting deadline.

Other commissioners have been more stark in their assessment. According to a recent article in the Los Angeles Times, two commissioners said, "the investigation is still hampered by heel-dragging by the White House and federal agencies."

Despite the administration's attitude toward the creation of this commission, all of us who supported it hoped that once established the administration would recognize the significance and importance of its work and cooperate fully.

We all owe an immense debt of gratitude to the commissioners for their hard work and dedication to this effort. Each of them has already spent countless hours on this task and the families and the nation appreciate their work. It would be a shame if the administration's lack of cooperation prevented them from completing their important task.

As Vice Chairman Hamilton's remarks indicate, time is running out on the administration to reverse course and do right by this investigation. Time is running out on the commission to get the information it needs to complete their work. And time is running out on the families and all Americans to get the answers they deserve. I urge the administration to immediately and completely cooperate with the commission so this work can be completed successfully to the expectations of those families who have given so much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

RECONSTRUCTION OF IRAQ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I have just come from a meeting to discuss the Appropriations Committee work beginning next week on the request from President Bush for \$87 billion in urgent supplemental appropriations for Iraq. Of that \$87 billion, roughly \$66 billion is in support of the military and the mission in Iraq; \$21 billion is for

the reconstruction of Iraq. We will begin writing an appropriations bill in response to all of this next Tuesday morning at 10.

I wish to bring to my colleagues' attention a couple of things with respect to this issue. First, when America sends its sons and daughters to defend our interests, when America puts its soldiers in harm's way, it has an obligation to provide the resources and funding needed to support their mission. I will support that. I will vote for that. I believe the Senate, the entire Congress will do that. But, there is a difference between providing the funding on an urgent basis for support of our troops to carry out their mission in Iraq and Afghanistan and the request for the reconstruction of Iraq. I want to describe that difference.

Iraq is a country with substantial resources. It is not a country desperately impoverished. It is a country with 24 million people. It possesses the second largest oil reserves in the world. Ambassador Bremer told us this week that when pumping at capacity, by next July he expects the Iraq oil fields to be pumping at about 3 million barrels per day. That produces about \$20 billion in revenue per year, \$16 billion of which is available for export; therefore, the development of currency as a result of the export sales of \$16 billion a year of oil, each year, from the country of Iraq. This is not an impoverished country. This a country with substantial wealth under its sands. Pumping that wealth in the form of oil and selling it produces substantial revenue for the 24 million people.

With respect to the question of the reconstruction, I want to go back to April of this year and to a "Night Line" program in which Ted Koppel had on one of the top folks in the Department of State who is in charge of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Andrew Natsios. He was asking Mr. Natsios about what would be required of the American taxpayers for the reconstruction of Iraq. I want to read this exchange because it occurred on the ABC television network 5 months ago.

Ted Koppel says: You are saying that the top cost for the U.S. taxpayer will be \$1.7 billion with respect to the reconstruction of Iraq?

Mr. Natsios, one of the top officials in the Department of State, who heads the USAID which has the mission for projects for reconstruction: Yes, for the reconstruction. Then there is \$700 million in the supplemental budget.

He was referring to something we had done earlier this year for humanitarian relief.

Koppel says: But as far as reconstruction goes, the American taxpayer will not be hit for more than \$1.7 billion, no matter how long the process takes?

Mr. Natsios: That is our plan. That is our intention.

Koppel says: And these figures, outlandish figures I have seen, there is a bit of hoopla in all of this?